

IN THE CLAIMS

This is a complete and current listing of the claims, marked with status identifiers in parentheses. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) Device for treating a gas/liquid mixture, comprising:

- an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment;
 - an inlet for admitting the flow of mixture into the lower compartment;
 - an agglomerating unit placed between the lower and upper compartment for enlarging the liquid droplets in the mixture;
 - a separator arranged in the upper compartment downstream of the agglomerating unit for further separating the mixture into a substantially liquid-containing mixture part and a substantially gas-containing mixture part;
 - a lower outlet for discharging the substantially liquid-containing mixture part from the lower compartment;
 - an upper outlet for discharging the substantially gas-containing mixture part from the upper compartment;
- ~~characterized by~~
- collecting means for collecting in or downstream the agglomerating unit the liquid droplets which have broken through the agglomerating unit; and

- recycling means for recycling the collected liquid from the collecting means to the lower compartment.

2. (Currently Amended) Device for treating a gas/liquid mixture, comprising:

- an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment;
- an inlet for admitting the flow of mixture into the lower compartment;
- an agglomerating unit placed between the lower and upper compartment for enlarging the liquid droplets in the mixture;
- a lower outlet for discharging the substantially liquid-containing mixture part from the lower compartment;
- an upper outlet for discharging the substantially gas-containing mixture part from the upper compartment;

~~characterized by~~

- collecting means for collecting on the downstream side of the agglomerating unit liquid droplets which have broken through the agglomerating unit; and
- recycling means for recycling the collected liquid to the lower compartment from the collecting means.

3. (Currently Amended) Device according to the claim 1-~~or~~2, wherein the agglomerating unit comprises a wire mesh.

4. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in ~~any of the~~
~~claims 1-3~~claim 1, wherein the collecting means comprise at
least one collecting reservoir extending in the agglomerating
unit for collecting the broken-through liquid therein, and
wherein recycling means comprise a discharge conduit extending
from the collecting reservoir to below the level of the liquid
collected in the lower compartment.

5. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~,
wherein the collecting means are arranged over substantially
15% of the cross-section of the vessel.

6. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in ~~either of the~~
~~foregoing claims 3-5~~claim 3, wherein the mesh is embodied to
allow the supplied liquid to break through from a minimum K-
value of about 0.1.

7. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in ~~any of the~~
~~foregoing claims~~claim 1, wherein the agglomerating unit
extends substantially horizontally.

8. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in ~~any of the~~
~~foregoing claims~~claim 1, wherein the agglomerating unit
extends over substantially the whole cross-section of the
upright column.

9. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in ~~any of the foregoing claims~~claim 1, wherein the thickness of the agglomerating unit is substantially constant.
10. (Original) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the separator comprises one or more cyclone separators.
11. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 10~~, wherein the separator comprises one or more axial recycle cyclones, the liquid discharge of which extends from the separator to below the liquid level in the lower compartment.
12. (Currently Amended) Device as claimed in ~~any of the foregoing claims~~claim 1, wherein the inlet is connected to a pre-treatment unit for carrying out a first liquid/gas separation, which pre-treatment unit comprises an inlet cyclone separator arranged in the lower compartment.
13. (Currently Amended) Method for treating a gas/liquid mixture in an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment, comprising ~~of~~:
- feeding the gas/liquid flow into the lower compartment of the column;
 - guiding the gas/liquid flow through an agglomerating unity arranged between the lower and upper compartment at high

speed such that liquid breaks through to a position beyond the downstream surface of the agglomerating unit;

- collecting the broken-through liquid;
- recycling the collected liquid to the lower compartment;
- guiding the mixture through a separator in the upper compartment for further separating the mixture into a substantially liquid-containing mixture part and a substantially gas-containing mixture part; and

- discharging the mixture from the lower compartment and discharging the mixture from the upper compartment.

14. (Currently Amended) Method for treating a gas/liquid mixture in an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment, comprising ~~of~~:

- feeding the gas/liquid flow into the lower compartment of the column;
- guiding the gas/liquid flow through an agglomerating unit arranged between the lower and upper compartment at high speed such that liquid breaks through to a position beyond the downstream surface of the agglomerating unit;
- collecting the broken-through liquid;
- recycling the collected liquid to the lower compartment;
- discharging the mixture from the lower compartment; and
- discharging the mixture from the upper compartment.

15. (Currently Amended) Method as claimed in claim ~~13-or-14~~, wherein the K-value of the supplied mixture amounts to at least 0.1.

16. (Currently Amended) Method as claimed in claim ~~13, 14-or-15~~, further comprising ~~of-further~~ separating the mixture in the upper compartment by guiding the mixture through one or more cyclone separators and carrying the separated liquid part to the lower compartment and the separated gas part to the upper outlet.

17. (Currently Amended) Method as claimed in ~~any-of-the-claims-13-16~~claim 13, further comprising ~~of~~-pre-treating the introduced gas/liquid flow for separating a part of the liquid from the gas/liquid mixture, wherein the pretreatment comprises of guiding the introduced gas/liquid mixture through one or more inlet cyclones.

18. (Currently Amended) Method as claimed in ~~any-of-the-claims-13-17~~claim 13, to be performed in a device ~~as-claimed-in-any-of-the-claims-1-12~~.

19. (Currently Amended) Device ~~or-method~~ as claimed in ~~any-of-the-foregoing-claims~~claim 1, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and ~~or~~ water.

20. (New) Device according to the claim 2, wherein the agglomerating unit comprises a wire mesh.

21. (New) Device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the collecting means comprise at least one collecting reservoir extending in the agglomerating unit for collecting the broken-through liquid therein, and wherein recycling means comprise a discharge conduit extending from the collecting reservoir to below the level of the liquid collected in the lower compartment.

22. (New) Device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the collecting means are arranged over substantially 15% of the cross-section of the vessel.

23. (New) Device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the mesh is embodied to allow the supplied liquid to break through from a minimum K-value of about 0.1.

24. (New) Device as claimed in claim 5, wherein the mesh is embodied to allow the supplied liquid to break through from a minimum K-value of about 0.1.

25. (New) Device as claimed in claim 10, wherein the separator comprises one or more axial recycle cyclones, the

liquid discharge of which extends from the separator to below the liquid level in the lower compartment.

26. (New) Method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the K-value of the supplied mixture amounts to at least 0.1.

27. (New) Method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising further separating the mixture in the upper compartment by guiding the mixture through one or more cyclone separators and carrying the separated liquid part to the lower compartment and the separated gas part to the upper outlet.

28. (New) Method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising pre-treating the introduced gas/liquid flow for separating a part of the liquid from the gas/liquid mixture, wherein the pretreatment comprises of guiding the introduced gas/liquid mixture through one or more inlet cyclones.

29. (New) Method as claimed in claim 14, to be performed in a device.

30. (New) Device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and water.

31. (New) Method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and water.

32. (New) Method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and water.